

### REMARKS

By this paper, claims 1, 9, 18 and 19 have been amended for the purposes of clarity. Claims 1-15, 18 and 19 remain pending in the present application.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

In the outstanding Office action dated August 10, 2005, claims 1, 4-6, 9, 12, 13, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Abrams et al. (5,341,818). Additionally, claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of the Abrams et al. patent. In so rejecting the claims, the Examiner stated that the cited reference discloses "a process for forming a small diameter elongated device (10) comprising forming a male end (15) at an extremity of a first elongated member formed of a first continuous material, forming a female end (13) at an extremity of a second continuous material, and permanently securing the male end...within the female end."

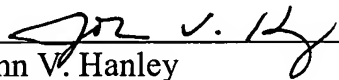
It is respectfully submitted, however, that the Abrams patent neither anticipates nor renders obvious the subject matter recited in pending claims 1-15, 18 and 19. Significantly, the Abrams reference relies on a sleeve (13) to join two elongated members (11, 12) to one another. Neither of the disclosed members (11, 12) have any feature formed in an extremity that could be characterized as a female end. Moreover, there is no teaching of an elongated member which includes a female end, the elongated member and female end being formed of a continuous material, as is required by process claims 1-

17 and 19 as well as apparatus claims 8-15 and 18. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-15, 18 and 19 are allowable over the Abrams patent.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have attempted to completely respond to the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office action. In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully request that the application be reconsidered, the claims allowed and the application passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,  
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